preliminary figures regarding the progress of expenditure, utilisation of Army Budget has not fallen short by around Rs. 1000/- crores.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Registration of New Products in CSD

4723. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Canteen Stores Department is not opening for new products;

(b) whether it is also a fact that ony the old registered products get a chance in the CSD;

(c) what steps are proposed to open up the Canteen Stores Department to competition for the benefit of the service personnel; and

(d) the details of steps proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) The existing provisions for introduction of items in Canteen Stores Department inventory encourage competition, for the benefit of service personnel. The system of introduction of items involves Preliminary Screening by a Committee, Market Survey to ascertain retail rate and acceptability, Price Negotiations by a Committee, Factory Inspection and Hygienic Testing. Requests are considered at various levels, in accordance with the established procedure, for introduction of items and decisions arc taken accordingly.

(d) In view of the answer at (c) above, the question docs not arise.

Clearance to digitize Topo Sheets

4724. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested to accord clearance to digitize topo sheets and for permitting NRSA to supply unmasked IRS satellite data for use by the consultants for Natural Hazard Mitigation studies to save lives and properties during floods and cyclone; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES,): (a) and (b) Government of Andhra Pradesh have approached Ministry of Defence for according security clearance permitting them to digitize topo sheets on various scales covering the entire state to facilitate their project relating to Hazard Mitigation. They have also requested for acquiring unmasked satellite data from NRSA.

The Defence Ministry has since approved the proposal to include Andhra Pradesh State Remote Sensing Application Centre (APSRAC) in the list of Government agencies authorised to digitize topo sheets already published by Survey of India, under the existing parameters and conditions.

Accidents during training of Pilots

4725. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of accidents taken place during the training of trainee pilots in the Air Forfce during the year 1998-99 and 1999-2000;

(b) whether it is a fact that many of the aircrafl&being used for training are obsolete and Government have also thought for purchasing new aircrafts for the above mentioned purpose;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what steps are being taken by the Indian Air Force to reduce the number of accidents?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The number of training related accidents during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 has been 02 and 04 respectively.

(b) and (c)The aircrafts used for initial training are operating well within the total technical life and are not obsolete. However, the Mig-21 aircraft presently being used for stage-Ill training of fighter pilots has been considered sub-optimal. Therefor, it has been proposed to induct Advanced Jet Trainers into the Air Force.

(d) A High Powered Committee on Fighter Aircraft Accidents (COFAA) was constituted under the chairmanship of Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri to analyse the causes of accidents which submitted its report in September, 1997. It has made certain recommendations to minimise accident rate. Implementation of these recommendations would involve changes in